

ANNFIELD PLAIN
Urban District Council.



MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT

FOR 1908.

HARPERLEY,

JANUARY, 28th, 1909.

TO THE ANNFIELD PLAIN URBAN DISTRICT
COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honour to present your Council with my report upon the condition of the district in respect to (i) the Factory and Workshops Act, (ii) its Sanitary State, (iii) the Amount of Sickness due to Zymotic Diseases, and (iv) Vital Statistics for the year 1908. The District practically depends upon coal-mining for its very existence. Whereas all factories, trades and general sanitary condition of the inhabitants come under the supervision of your Council ; the mines are regulated by special acts. The past year has been a fairly prosperous one, and there was no necessity to give assistance to the “unemployed.”

Under the Factories and Workshops Act, it devolves upon the Medical Officer of Health and Inspector to see that all classes of workers have sufficient ventilation in their Workshops and that the sanitary additions are ample, also that the premises are free from overcrowding, with easy means of exit in case of fire. The term “Factory” is used where some mechanical means are employed, and “Workshop” where only manual labour is in use. The former consist of Brick Works, Gas Works, Electric Production Works, Cornmills, Aerated Water Works and Saw Mill, making a total of nine ; and the latter consist of Tailors, Milliners, Shoemakers, Blacksmiths, Joiners, Grocers and Bakers, making a total of twenty one. The Bakeries are only retail, in a small way, and are not under the Special Bakeries’ Act. The result of the inspections was very satisfactory and in no instance was any material injurious to health used in any of the Works.

SURVEYOR'S and INSPECTOR'S DEPARTMENT.

NEW HOUSES. 106 New Houses were erected during the year, of this number, only two were divided into tenements, consisting of 3 rooms below, and 4 above, with a combined yard to each house. The others were self-contained houses having from 3 to 5 rooms each, with self-contained yards, and possessing all the necessary sanitary requirements. The majority of houses were built for workmen's residences and are well adapted for that purpose.

OLD PROPERTY. The district consists of small colliery villages, and scattered groups of cottages inhabited chiefly by miners. The old houses built previous to the Local Authority having power over their construction, are here dealt with. Some through pit-falls, &c, have become uninhabitable and have been closed or destroyed; many, however, in consequence of the great demand for houses, have been patched up so as to become habitable, but cannot be described as pleasant or comfortable dwellings. The colliery owners of such property are more amenable to the advice of your Council than are the private owners, to many of whom the cost of improvements is a matter of some importance. Appended are some notes concerning the inferior houses referred to.

NEW KYO. A modern village as to construction of houses and needs no remark

ANNFIELD PLAIN. There are a large number of old houses, notably Thompson's Buildings, Taylor's Buildings, Russell's Yard, Hall's Houses, Murray's Houses, Lumley's Houses and Colpitts' Houses. Many of them are back to back cottages without suitable ventilation, and others contain defects which need a considerable amount of overhauling to render the habitations comfortable.

(THE LIZZIE).—SOUTH PONTOP. The majority of the houses are wooden erections, many of them damaged considerably by pit falls. Several have been closed by order of the Council, and others

by owners in consequence of their dangerous condition. It is reported that some are to be patched up again for habitation, but such a course is not to be recommended for the following reasons. A portion of the village is not in a good sanitary condition, as regards out-houses, the houses are of very inferior construction, and any inconvenience caused by their destruction will not be felt by the workmen, as new dwellings are gradually being built to accommodate them.

GREENCROFT. Nothing important; new yards have been made, but the spouting is defective.

EAT CASTLE. The houses here are made up of 2, 3 and 4 rooms. The Out houses are Privy Middens, they are covered, but not as they should be.

NEW CORNWALL. Four houses have been closed owing to pit-falls; the others are fairly satisfactory with the exception of a block called Weston's Buildings which are most uncomfortable habitations—three houses being made into single-roomed tenements with no plaster ceilings between the upper and lower rooms.

CATCHGATE. On the road from Weston's Buildings to Catchgate there is a row of houses, the out-offices of which are defective.

WEST KYO. Several blocks need attention, notably Alma Place, and some cottages adjoining called Smith's Houses, Hobson's Houses and colliery houses.

DIPTON and NEIGHBOURHOOD. Improvements to roads and out-offices have been carried out in South Medomsley. At the Barracks and Delight Bank, there are cottages back to back, requiring attention, and two at the former place might with advantage be closed. There have been certain improvements at Delight, but more ventilation is needed for the back to back houses and the out-offices improved. Several old houses belonging to the Marquis of Bute require overhauling. There are also several at the block of buildings on the road to Flint Hill

called Todd's Buildings, two houses are in bad condition and need immediate attention, and three more at Wilkinson's Buildings.

FLINT HILL. At the back of the main road there are several cottages, viz., Bolam's Houses which require immediate attention.

HILL TOP. The condition of this collection of houses is well known to your Council and the inhabitants are usually in keeping with the habitations, so there is no need to enlarge upon the state of this group as it has been reported to your Council.

WHITE-LE-HEAD. Nothing striking to report.

LILY COTTAGES. Mostly wooden erections, but for this kind of property, in fairly satisfactory condition.

In this brief summary of this district, details have not been given as to the various defects, because they have already come under the observation of the Inspector and have been referred to at the Council Meetings from time to time. It is a matter for a decision of the Council as to whether legal action should be taken or not, but it is very desirable that the influence of the Council should be executed upon the owners and occupiers, for in many cases the latter were more to blame than the former. During the year, it was found necessary to close 21 houses, three of them by magistrates order, and the others owing to colliery subsidence rendering them dangerous. The whole of them were situated at South Pontop. There were 28 old houses down for repairs, several being completed and others on the way. 30 Ash closets were constructed replacing old Privy Middens. and 127 Notices were served to remedy insanitary nuisances.

SEWERS. Practically the whole district is sewered, and the sewage conveyed to two outfall works, both of which are undergoing considerable enlargement owing to the rapid increase of population, with the following exceptions, two small villages have a separate outfall into a field, a sort of broad irrigation. It is now intended to carry the

sewage from the upper end of Dipton and South Medomsley, by a circuitous route, to the existing works at Dipton, as, after long negotiation, no land could be procured for the same filtering tanks. This will be proceeded with at once.

SCAVENGING and REMOVAL of REFUSE.

The Scavenging is done by your own employees and the removal of refuse is carried out by contract, and the deposits are in suitable places where no nuisance is created.

The SLAUGHTER HOUSES are very satisfactory and the bye-laws are carefully carried out.

OVERCROWDING. Owing to the scarcity of workmen's houses, there is a kind of overcrowding, this consisting of allowing a married son or daughter to live with the parents. This occurs in the modern houses where there are three or more rooms, very seldom, however, do the occupants exceed the space allowed.

There are three LODGING HOUSES, one built for the purpose, the other two, ranshacked houses, quite good enough for the lodgers they entertain. They are regularly white-washed and kept decently

MILK SUPPLY.

Although there are no milk dealers, there is a plentiful supply of milk for the district, distributed from door to door. All who provide the supply are cow-keeper either occupying farms or renting a piece of land—none of the cows being entirely stall-fed. The byres attached to farms are after one model, and fairly good, the others are merely wooden structures often deficient in ventilation. The cows frequently present a dirty appearance, being allowed to lie down in their own excrement. The utensils the milk is stored in, however, are kept very clean, or decomposition occurs, to the loss of the seller.

The WATER SUPPLY is good and abundant and comes from the Works of the Consett and Weardale Water Company

The SCHOOLS are splendidly constructed and possessed of every accommodation.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

The number of Notifiable Diseases reported during the year amounted to 103 made up of the following, viz., Scarlatina, 64 ; Diphtheria, 15 ; Enteric Fever, 14 ; and Erysipelas, 10. Those for the previous year were 120, showing a decrease of 17 for 1908.

SCARLATINA as usual may be considered a permanent resident, its greatest incidence occurred in October, but not epidemically.

DIPHTHERIA never spread seriously. The half were transferred to the Isolation Hospital, and helped materially to cut short further spread.

As regards ENTERIC FEVER, the majority of cases appeared in conjunction as it were, with Epidemic Enteritis, shewing that the apparent cause was similar—probably atmospheric. All the cases except one (unsuitable) were removed to the Hospital and the threatened Epidemic prevented.

ERYSIPELAS never showed itself transferable, i.e., direct from one to another. None of the outbreaks of infectious diseases could be charged to insanitary conditions, nor yet their propagation ; there is one definite cause, “friendly and neighbourly visiting.” Objections to the Hospital are lessening, but have not been entirely overcome. All Objectors were personally pleaded with, and on failing, the patient was seen to be isolated in a separate room.

In the adjoining district, but under the Lanchester Union, a Small-Pox Hospital was erected some time ago, it is now used as a Sanatorium for the benefit of paupers, but in the cases of Phthisis the M O H has power to send cases at the charge of the Council

NON-NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

In the case of non-notifiable Infectious Diseases, Measles appeared on two occasions, but no spread took place and no fatality followed. Whooping Cough was imported in January and cases occurred over a period of three months giving no less than seven fatalities the disease, however, never spread to the extent of interfering with school attendance, necessitating closure. Epidemic Diarrhœa was prevalent from September to November and resulted in nineteen deaths.

VITAL STATISTICS

The number of births registered during the year amounted to 582 giving a birth-rate of 36·83 per 1000, and deaths registered in the same period were 243 giving a death-rate of 15·31, estimating the population at the end of June to be 15,800. The birth-rate is higher and the death-rate practically the same as that of the previous year. Both rates hold a favourable position when compared with County average.

INFANTILE MORTALITY shows no improvement upon the year 1907, all the same, it is lower than that of the County, as will be seen by the attached table. The Mortality of Infants under the age of one year reached 83, being exactly a third of the total deaths—a very high percentage. From the 83 may be deducted 18, due to Premature Birth and Congenital Defects, simply “born to die,” and to the latter may be added 17 more suffering from Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus, that were never expected to live. Thus the chief cause of Infantile Mortality is fairly apparent. Zymotic Diseases account for a few deaths but Diarrhœa with its companion Enteritis were responsible for 22 deaths. When the chief causes are given as stated above, only a moiety can be blamed for dieting and insanitary surroundings

The following table shows how the various rates of this district compare with that of the County, and in all cases, except Scarlatina and Diphtheria, the difference is in favour of your District.

			County.	Annfield Plain.
Birth-rate	(per 1,000 population)	...	37·0	36·83
Death-rate	„ „ „	...	17·5	15·31
Zymotic Death-rate,	„ „ „	...	2·70	1·20
Infantile Mortality	(per 1,000 births)	...	151	142·6
Small-Pox	(per 1 000 population)	...	nil	nil
Scarlet Fever	„ „ „	...	0·07	0·31
Diphtheria	„ „ „	...	0·18	0·25
Enteric Fever	„ „ „	...	0·18	0·18
Measles	„ „ „	...	0·27	nil
Whooping Cough	„ „ „	...	0·53	0·44
Diarrhœa	„ „ „	...	1·44	1·20
Phthisis	„ „ „	...	0·95	0·31
Other Tubercular Diseases	„ „ „	...	0·70	0·37
Acute Respiratory Diseases	„ „ „	...	2·81	2·02

For particulars, see Government Schedules attached.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

T. BENSON,

Medical Officer.

THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,
ANNFIELD PLAIN.

Table 1.

ANNFIELD PLAIN URBAN DISTRICT.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1908 and previous years.

YEAR.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.						TOTAL DEATHS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE DISTRICT.	Deaths of Non-residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.	NETT DEATHS AT ALL AGES BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.					
		Number	Rate.	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.		6	7				8	9	10	11	12	13
				Number	Rate per 1000 Births registered.	Number	Rate.											
1898	11,800	475	40	104	204.7	190	16					12	202	17				
1899	12,100	442	35.5	75	169.6	192	16					10	202	16.8				
1900	12,300	472	39	85	180	223	18					6	229	18.5				
1901	12,500	523	41.8	86	162.5	229	18.3						229	18.3				
1902	12,700	523	40	79	151	210	16.5					12	222	17.5				
1903	13,100	510	38.9	89	174.5	232	17.7					13	245	18.7				
1904	13,500	524	38.4	83	158.4	238	17.6					11	249	18.5				
1905	14,000	485	34.6	94	193.8	213	15.2					10	223	15.9				
1906	14,600	533	36.5	97	181.9	233	15.9					8	241	16.5				
1907	15,200	514	33.8	73	142	210	13.8					21	231	15.2				
Averages for years 1898-1907.	13,180	500	37.8	86	171.8	217	16.5					10	227	17.29				
1908	15,800	582	36.83	83	142.6	222	14.04					21	243	15.31				

Area of District in acres)
(exclusive of area covered by water), } 3475

Total population at all ages 12481
Number of inhabited houses 2271
Average number of persons per house 5.5

} At Census
of 1901.

Table III.

ANNFIELD PLAIN URBAN DISTRICT.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year 1908.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.							No. of cases removed to hospital from each locality.
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.						
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 and upward	
Small-pox ...								
Cholera ..								
Diphtheria (in- cluding Mem- branous croup	15	1	1	12		1		7
Erysipelas ..	10				1	9		
Scarlet fever ...	64	2	24	36	2			32
Typhus fever...								
Enteric fever ...	14		3	3	3	5		13
Relapsing fever								
Continued fever								
Puerperal fever								
Plague ...								
Totals	103	3	28	57	6	15		52

Isolation Hospital at Tanfield.

Total available beds 59.

Number of Diseases that can be concurrently treated, 4 or 5.

Institutions within the District receiving sick and infirm persons from outside the District—

Nil.

Institutions outside the District receiving sick and infirm persons from the District—

Tanfield Hospital. Lanchester Union. County Asylum.

Small-Pox Hospital at Maiden Law, now used as a Sanatorium.

Other Institutions, the deaths in which have been distributed among the several localities in the District—NIL.

Table IV.

ANNFIELD PLAIN URBAN DISTRICT.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during the Year 1908.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Deaths at the subjoined ages of Residents whether occurring in or beyond the District.							Total Deaths whether of Residents or non Residents in Public Institu- tions in the District.
	All ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and up- wards	
Small-pox								
Measles								
Scarlet fever	5		2	3				
Whooping-cough	7	4	3					
Diphtheria and mem- branous croup	3	1	1			1		
Croup	1		1					
Fever { Typhus								
{ Enteric	3		2			1		
{ Other contin'd								
Epidemic influenza								
Cholera								
Plague... ..								
Diarrhœa	19	15	3				1	
Enteritis	11	7	3			1		
Puerperal fever								
Erysipelas								
Other septic diseases...								
Phthisis (Pulmonary								
Tuberculosis)	5			2	3			
Other tubercular diseases	6	2	3		1			
Cancer, malignant disease	11					8	3	
Bronchitis	17	3	5			3	6	
Pneumonia	15	6	1	2	2	3	1	
Pleurisy								
Other diseases of Res- piratory organs								
Alcoholism)						3	2	
Cirrhosis of liver)	5							
Venereal diseases								
Premature birth	12	12						
Diseases and accidents of parturition								
Heart diseases	24	1		1	1	13	8	
Accidents	14		2		3	7	2	
Suicides								
All other causes	85	32	4	3	3	21	22	
All causes	243	83	30	11	13	61	45	

THOMAS BENSON, *Medical Officer of Health*

January 28th, 1909.

Table V.

ANNFIELD PLAIN URBAN DISTRICT.

Infantile Mortality during the Year 1908.

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.			Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	2-3 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	1-2 Months.	2-3 Months.	3-4 Months.	4-5 Months.	5-6 Months.	6-7 Months.	7-8 Months.	8-9 Months.	9-10 Months.	10-11 Months.	11-12 Months.	Total Deaths under One Year.	
All Causes	{	Certified ...	...																
		Uncertified ...	...																
Common Infectious Diseases.	{	Small-pox ...	...																
		Chicken-pox ...	...																
		Measles ...	...																
		Scarlet Fever ...	...																
		Diphtheria : Croup ...	...															I	I
Diarrhoeal Diseases.	{	Whooping Cough ...	...		I		I					I			I	I			4
		Diarrhoea, all forms ...	...						3	I	3	2	3	2		I			15
		Enteritis, Muco-enteritis, Gastro-enteritis	...		I		I		I	I		2		I			I		7	
		Gastritis, Gastro-intestinal Catarrh	...																	
		Wasting Diseases.	{	Premature Birth ...	10	2		12												12
Congenital Defects ...	2	I			I	4	I			I							6			
Injury at Birth ...	...																		
Want of Breast-milk, Starvation	...							I										I		
Atrophy, Debility Marasmus	4			I	I	6	5	2	I		2	I						17		
Tuberculous Diseases.	{	Tuberculous Meningitis	...															I	1	
		Tuberculous Peritonitis	...																I	
		Tabes Mesenterica	...									I								
		Other Tuberculous Diseases	...																	
Other Causes.	{	Erysipelas ...	...																
		Syphilis ...	...																
		Rickets ...	...																
		Meningitis (not Tuberculous)	...							I	I						I		3	
		Convulsions ...	...	2			2					I							3
		Bronchitis ...	...						I	I								I	3
		Laryngitis ...	...												I				I
		Pneumonia										I	I		I		2	I	6
		Suffocation, overlaying...	...																	
		Other Causes	...	I			I		I											2
			17	5	3	2	27	8	9	4	6	8	5	4	2	3	5	2	83	

Births in the year { legitimate 564.
 { illegitimate 18.

Deaths in the year of { legitimate infants 80
 { illegitimate " 3

ANNFIELD PLAIN URBAN DISTRICT.

Factories, Workshops, Laundries, Workplaces & Homework

1.—INSPECTION.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

Premises.		Number of		
		Inspections.	Written Notices	Prosecutions.
Factories ...	9	18	Nil.	Nil.
Including Factory Laundries)				
Workshops ...	21	42	Nil.	Nil.
(Including Workshop Laundries)				
Workplaces ...	...	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Total	...	60		

2.—DEFECTS FOUND.

Nil.

3.—HOME WORK.

Nil.

4.—REGISTERED WORKSHOPS.

Not registered.

5.—OTHER MATTERS.

Nil.

T. BENSON, *Medical Officer of Health.*

January 28th, 1909.

